

only damaged Houston, but also Louisiana, Mississippi; and it dumped a great deal of water in Pennsylvania this past weekend.

For my colleagues not from coastal areas, this was just a tropical storm. Damage was exclusively from flooding. There was no damage from high winds, tornadoes or other weather events had it been a full-blown hurricane.

While many areas of Houston had significant flooding, the 29th district was particularly hard hit. Many of the city's bayous run through my district. Bayous such as Hunting and Greens, overflowed their banks, causing widespread flooding in businesses and residential areas.

Over 10,000 residents were forced from their homes by Greens Bayou alone, as flooding reached the 1,000-year flood level. Even those who were not flooded out of their residences suffered thousands of dollars worth of damage to their homes and personal belongings.

Damage estimates for homes have not yet been completed, but the total is significant. 303 homes totally destroyed; 12,451 with major damage and are uninhabitable; and 20,491 homes have minor damage, with families able to at least partially begin the process of moving back in.

I would like to thank the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, for their prompt response in the Houston area. Almost as soon as the rains stopped, FEMA personnel were establishing a command center in the Greens Point area and setting up disaster relief centers where victims could register for home inspections, SBA loans, or temporary housing assistance and other Federal benefits, along with State agencies in these centers.

As of 6 p.m. last night, 47,000 people had registered with FEMA on their toll-free hot line; over 41,000 have registered for the disaster housing program; and \$17 million in funding has been approved. For individual and family grant programs, almost 17,500 registrations have been received; and nearly \$13 million in funding has been approved.

I would like to recognize the thousands of volunteers from the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army in their role in the recovery process. These organizations quickly opened shelters for those driven from their homes. They have provided more than 800,000 meals to victims of this disaster and currently are offering additional aid so that individuals can begin to replace clothing and other belongings that were ruined or swept away during the floods. Also our Army, Air Force and National Guard, and AmeriCorps, and numerous other government agencies have contributed to helping Houstonians and people who live in Harris County clean up and begin the long process of rebuilding their lives.

The task ahead of us, though, is going to be long and arduous. For example, the damage to our hospitals will place a heavy burden on our health

care infrastructure for the near future. Let me share some of the numbers: in my district, East Houston Medical Center, complete evacuation for 2 or 3 months before reopening; maybe 1 year for complete restoration.

Hermann Memorial Hospital, one of our two Tier I trauma centers in Houston, evacuated and closed for an estimated 6 to 8 weeks.

Methodist Hospital closed due to extensive damage, potential partial reopening this week, but 6 months to restore completely.

St. Luke's Hospital, their emergency room suffered extensive damage. Six months to 1 year for complete restoration.

St. Joseph's Hospital, emergency room closed for extensive damage, 3 to 6 months before reopening, and 1 year before complete restoration.

Northwest Columbia Hospital, closed and unable to operate possibly for 1 year due to extensive damage.

Ben Taub, one of our public hospitals, full to capacity; emergency room on diversion status except for extreme cases.

LBJ Hospital, damaged but still operating, another one of our public hospitals, full to capacity with emergency room operators up 260 percent compared to prestorm level.

Park Plaza, emergency room operations up 440 percent compared to prestorm levels.

Even though classes were out and summer school had not yet begun, our public schools were not spared. 155 of the 300 schools in Houston ISD suffered flood damage, with 13 of those sustaining substantial damage.

Other districts were not spared, either. North Forest ISD's schools and administration building suffered severe damage, especially for office equipment and computers. They were also forced to postpone their summer school program.

Additionally, the Sheldon Independent School District suffered severe flooding in all but two of their schools, and they have been forced to cancel part of their summer school program.

There is a great deal of work to do, Mr. Speaker, but we will continue to rebuild our homes and schools and our business. I thank the agencies that helped us.

EAST SIDE ACCESS AND SECOND AVENUE SUBWAY CRUCIAL NEW YORK CITY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, in New York City there are two crucial transportation projects: the East Side Access and the Second Avenue Subway. These two projects would provide the New York region with the first significant expansion of transit capacity in over half a century.

The MTA is moving forward with both projects on a fast track. Because they will be intersecting benefits and impacts, they need to advance together. The New York delegation is united in wanting to provide support to these projects in this year's title III appropriations bill. We have joined the MTA in requesting \$149 million for the East Side Access and \$20.5 million for the Second Avenue Subway.

The Committee on Appropriations had made a very serious mistake by providing only \$10 million for the East Side Access and absolutely no funding for the Second Avenue Subway. This is a terrible decision that seriously undermines New York's ability to meet its transportation needs for the 21st century.

The New York City region is the largest transit market in the United States with nearly 8 million daily trips. Our subways and railroads have twice the ridership of the rest of the Nation's rail system combined.

At the same time, the MTA is the most efficient transit system in the country, covering over 60 percent of its operating cost from the fare box. New York City is serious about the need to continue investment in our transit system. The MTA expects to fund over 70 percent of its 2000-2004 capital program with city, State and internal resources, a commitment of over \$12 billion.

New York State has included \$1.05 billion for the Second Avenue Subway and its MTA 5-year capital plan and \$1.5 billion for the East Side Access. The MTA is committed to funding 50 percent of the cost for the Second Avenue Subway and East Side Access.

The Second Avenue Subway, which will run from East Harlem to the tip of Manhattan and provide for eventual extensions into the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, is the most important project to the MTA's agenda. It will bring subway service to underserved areas of Manhattan, enable East Side Access passengers to travel to their jobs, and provide relief to passengers on the Lexington Avenue Subway, which is the most overcrowded subway in the entire country. The east side of Manhattan is one of the most densely populated areas in the country. We are continuing to grow in population, but our communities are served by only one subway line. We have neighborhoods with over 200,000 residents per square mile, and many must walk 15 or 20 minutes to reach the nearest subway. The project is vitally important to the economic health of the New York region.

The East Side Access will connect the Long Island Railroad to Manhattan's East Side, enabling over 70,000 Long Island and Queens residents to reach their jobs in the Grand Central terminal area, the most densely populated business district in the United States.

70,000 East Side Access riders cannot fit on the Lexington Avenue line, which already carries thousands of riders more than it was designed for. They

need the Second Avenue line. Unless these new riders have another transportation option, they will overwhelm the Lex, and reduce the capacity with disastrous results for people who live in my district and Manhattan and Queens, as well as those who live in the Bronx and Brooklyn.

The Second Avenue Subway, which will provide an alternative route to hundreds of thousands of riders, is the only solution to this problem. The Second Avenue Subway and East Side Access have the support of the New York delegation, the MTA, the governor, and the mayor. What is more, the Second Avenue Subway has had the financial support, serious support from the City, the State, and the Federal Government.

It makes absolutely no sense for Congress to stop funding the Second Avenue Subway now that it is underway by providing only \$10 million for the East Side Access and no money for the Second Avenue Subway. This transportation appropriations bill gravely shortchanges the New York metropolitan region and undermines our financial future.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and particularly the New York delegation to vote against the transportation bill when it comes to the floor because the Second Avenue Subway was not continued in its funding. It is a safety hazard, a transportation hazard and it is just plain wrong, particularly when the State has committed over \$1 billion to fund this project.

Mr. Speaker, in New York City there are two crucial transportation projects—East Side Access and Second Avenue Subway.

These two projects would provide the New York Region with the first significant expansion of transit capacity in over half a century.

The MTA is moving both projects forward on a fast track.

Because they will have intersecting benefits and impacts, they need to advance together.

The New York delegation is united in wanting to provide support to these projects in this year's Title III appropriation.

We have joined the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in requesting \$149.5 million for East Side Access and \$20.5 million for the Second Avenue subway.

The Appropriations Committee has made a serious mistake by providing only \$10 million for East Side Access and no funding for the Second Avenue Subway.

This is a terrible decision that seriously undermines New York's ability to meet its transportation needs for the 21st Century.

The New York City Region is the largest transit market in the United States; with nearly 8 million daily trips.

Our subways and railroads have twice the ridership of the rest of the nation's rail systems combined.

At the same time the MTA is the most efficient transit system in the country, covering over 60 percent of its operating costs from the farebox.

New York is serious about the need to continue investment in our transit system.

The MTA expects to fund over 70 percent of its 2000–2004 Capital program with City,

State, and internal resources, a commitment of over \$12 billion dollars.

It has included \$1.05 billion dollars for the Second Avenue Subway and \$1.5 billion dollars for East Side Access in its Capital Plan.

The MTA is committed to funding 50 percent of the cost for the Second Avenue subway and East Side Access.

The Second Avenue subway, which will run from East Harlem to the tip of Lower Manhattan, and provide for eventual extensions into The Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, is the most important project on the MTA's agenda.

It will bring subway service to underserved areas of Manhattan, enable East Side Access passengers to travel to their jobs and provide relief to passengers on the Lexington Avenue line, which is the most overcrowded subway line in the country.

The East Side of Manhattan is one of the most densely populated areas of the country.

We are continuing to grow in population, but our communities are served by only one subway line.

We have neighborhoods with over 200,000 residents per square mile, where many must walk 15 or 20 minutes to reach the nearest subway.

This project is vitally important to the economic health of the New York region.

The MTA is moving forward quickly with its plans to build the subway.

It has completed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the upper portion of the line and is working on a Supplemental DEIS for the remainder of the project.

Additionally, the MTA has completed a screening of qualifications and developed a short list of three consultant teams for the engineering and design consultant for this project.

It is currently preparing a request for proposals and it will award a contract and begin work on preliminary engineering this year.

East Side Access will connect the Long Island Rail Road to Manhattan's East Side, enabling over 70,000 Long Island and Queens residents to reach their jobs in the Grand Central Terminal area, the most densely developed business district in the United States.

Each of these riders will see their daily journey to work reduced by over 30 minutes.

The Final DEIS has been completed.

East Side Access received \$8 million from Congress last year and \$370.6 million from the State under the MTA Capital Plan.

The MTA has awarded contracts for engineering for tunnels in November 1998 and for the rest of the project in February 1999. They are awaiting a record of decision from the FTA.

It is the consensus opinion of most elected leaders in New York that these two projects must be completed together.

Seventy thousand East Side Access riders cannot fit onto the Lexington Avenue line which already carries thousands of riders more than it is designed for—they need the Second Avenue Subway.

Unless these new riders have another transportation option, they will overwhelm the Lex and actually reduce its capacity, with disastrous results for people who live in my district in Manhattan and Queens, as well as those who live in The Bronx and Brooklyn.

The Second Avenue subway, which will provide an alternative route to hundreds of thousands of riders, is the only solution to this problem.

The Second Avenue Subway and East Side Access have the support of the New York delegation, the MTA, the Governor and the Mayor.

What's more, the Second Avenue Subway has had the financial support of the City, the State and the Federal government.

The Speaker of the Assembly, Sheldon Silver, held up the MTA Capital Plan until he received a commitment for a full-length Second Avenue Subway. As a result \$1.05 billion is budgeted for the Subway in the MTA's five year.

The Manhattan Borough President, C. Virginia Fields, committed \$1 million from her budget for the Subway. The Second Avenue Subway was authorized under TEA-21 and last year, Congress provided \$3 million in new start funds.

It makes no sense for Congress to stop funding the Second Avenue Subway now that it is underway.

By providing only \$10 million for East Side Access and no money for the Second Avenue Subway, this Transportation Appropriations bill gravely short-changes the New York Metropolitan region and undermines our financial future.

I urge my colleagues, and particularly the New York delegation, to vote against this Transportation Appropriations bill.

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AMERICA'S ENERGY CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KIRK). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. REHBERG) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I wish to speak to America about our current energy crisis. While prices rise at the pump to over \$2 a gallon in some places and Californians are forced to contend with blackouts, this Nation is still in a position to extricate ourselves from this crisis and once and for all prevent future energy and fuel shortages.

There is no quick fix or one-stop-shop solution to this problem. Through a balanced approach combining research and development, capital investment and conservation measures, we can once and for all provide our Nation with clean, abundant energy.

We must commit ourselves to developing cheaper and more efficient ways of harnessing renewable sources of energy. We can now only meet a fraction of our energy needs with solar, hydro and wind powers. If we invest in developing these clean, unending energy sources, we will in time be able to satisfy much of our demand without using a drop of oil or a lump of coal.

While research and development will take time to show their benefits, there are things we can do now to ameliorate our situation. Building new power plants will start us on the road to providing energy for the near future. Improving our energy infrastructure will deliver what energy we have to homes, businesses and industries in a more efficient manner.